

WHY? A Resource Kit for Talking to Teens about Disaster, Relief, & Restoration

Who's the Real Superhero?

By Rev. Dr. Reed Lessing

Core Text: 1 Corinthians 3:5-9

Core Visual/Illustration:

Show a video clip from your favorite superhero movie, where the superhero gets all the credit. Clips to consider include the Superman movies, the TV show Smallville, the Spiderman flicks, the Avengers movies, or the Batman cartoons.

Major Teaching Points:

Teaching Point #1

1 Corinthians 3:5-9 God alone deserves all the credit, thanks, and praise! Ephesians 2:8-10 reminds us that our salvation is all thanks to God, not our works. Further, whatever works we do, God planned in advance for us to do them; so He deserves all the credit. Luke 17:10 reinforces this teaching.

Teaching Point #2

1 Corinthians 3:5 God works through means. "What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, THROUGH WHOM you came to believe – as the Lord has assigned to each his task." God does His extraordinary, miraculous, supernatural work through ordinary, everyday, natural human beings. He worked through helicopter pilots and soldiers to save the lives of thousands of people after Katrina. God can and will work through us too, even in small ways, to help the survivors. For more on God working through means, cf. *The Spirituality of the Cross*, 71-90.

Teaching Point #3

1 John 3:16-18; 4:7-11 The only reason we can do acts of love is because God the Father first loved us by sending His Son to the cross. Jesus Christ showed His love to us, not with empty words, but by the concrete action of laying down His life for us on the cross. In response and thankfulness, we are called to show our brothers and sisters love in concrete ways, like hurricane relief.

Questions/Discussion Starters for Youth:

1. Who is your favorite superhero? Why do people like superheroes?
2. If your favorite superhero were in charge of clean-up and disaster-relief for hurricanes, how would he/she do it?
3. The Corinthians considered Paul and Apollos as superheroes. For what reasons do you think Paul didn't want them to think this way?
4. Who does Paul think the superhero, or the one who should receive all the credit, is? What words does he use to communicate this?
5. So what does this mean for Paul? Does Paul think it's pointless to do the small job he's been given? Give a reason for your response.
6. If we are God's fellow workers, what does this mean for the small job we've been given to do?

7. What does this say about someone who raises \$25 for hurricane relief? What would Paul say to someone who thinks, "But I'm just one person. What can I do?"

8. What are some things, small though they might be, that God can use in big ways to bring relief, comfort, and hope to the victims of hurricanes and other disasters?

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